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6 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
7 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
8 AT SEATTLE

9 KURT ANGELONE,

10 Plaintiff,

11 v.

12 MICHAEL FURST, *et al.*,

13 Defendants.

No. C07-5538RJB-KLS

ORDER

14 This matter comes before the Court on plaintiff's "Motion for Relief of the Chief
15 Judge Robert Lasnik's Order Docket # 141 and Motion for Stay of Proceedings Pending
16 Requested Modification and/or Amendment of Order and Court's Consideration of the Below
17 Pleadings and Requested Relief." Dkt. # 144. On December 11, 2008, plaintiff filed a "Motion
18 for Extension of Time" in which he argued that the Honorable Karen L. Strombom, United
19 States Magistrate Judge, abused her discretion by strictly enforcing the limitations imposed by
20 the local civil rules. Dkt. # 128. Plaintiff went on to state:

21 The plaintiff believes that this Magistrate Judge is prejudice to the plaintiff suit
22 and is partial to the defendants and has acted for and on behalf as their advocate,
23 and she should not preside over any of the plaintiff's actions regarding this case
24 nevertheless is forced to first go through her despite the plaintiff never agreeing to
her presiding over anything with respect to this case.

25 Dkt. # 128 at 2. Judge Strombom considered plaintiff's allegation of bias and request for
26 removal under the standards of 28 U.S.C. §§ 144 and 455(a) before declining to recuse herself

ORDER

1 voluntarily. Dkt. # 137. Plaintiff now argues that both Judge Strombom and the undersigned
2 should have ignored his allegation of bias because he never intended to file a motion to recuse,
3 as evidenced by the fact that his allegation was not properly supported by an affidavit.

4 Allegations of bias and prejudice must be taken seriously. Achieving justice in a
5 particular case and fostering confidence in the judicial system as a whole require impartial
6 decisionmakers. Ignoring a clear allegation of bias, such as the one leveled by plaintiff against
7 Judge Strombom, would impede the review process established by Local Rule 8 and could make
8 subsequent decisions in the case subject to challenge. The fact that plaintiff failed to support his
9 allegation of bias may inform the Court's review under the governing statutes, but it does not
10 relieve the presiding judicial officer of her obligation to carefully consider the allegation of bias
11 and refer the matter to the Chief Judge.

12 Plaintiff's motion for relief and stay of proceedings is DENIED. Neither Judge
13 Strombom's original denial of plaintiff's motions for an extension of time nor her handling of
14 plaintiff's allegation of bias reflect prejudice.

15 Dated this 23rd day of February, 2009.

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18 Robert S. Lasnik
19 Chief Judge, United States District Court
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